

The 50 must-see children's films

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THE ARTICLE

The 50 must-see children's films

BNE: The British Film Institute (BFI) has released a list of 50 movies that they say all under-14-year-old children must see. More than 70 movie critics gave their top ten children's movies from around the world. The result is a wide variety of famous Hollywood blockbusters, such as *ET* and *Toy Story*, as well as more obscure movies, like *Where is the Friend's House*, an Iranian movie released in 1987. The number one film is Hayao Miyazaki's 2001 movie *Spirited Away*. Five of the top ten movies were not in English.

The BFI wants to encourage parents and schools to treat film as a serious school subject, the same as literature and art. The BFI website highlights the fact that films are a part of children's heritage. The top-50 list was created to promote the movies that children should see rather than those they shouldn't see. The website also notes some weak points of the list. The majority of the films are from English-speaking countries and most of the movies have boys as the central character.

Source: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/education/events/watchthis/>

WARM-UPS

1. CHILDREN'S MOVIES: This is a list from the British Film Institute of the top ten recommended children's movies. Talk about the list and the movies. Are there any children's movies that are not on the list that should be?

- Bicycle Thieves (Italy - 1948)
- ET (US - 1982)
- Kes (UK - 1969)
- Spirited Away (Japan - 2001)
- Toy Story (US - 1995)
- Les Quatre Cents Coups (France - 1959)
- Show Me Love (Sweden/Denmark -1998)
- Where is the Friend's House (Iran - 1987)
- The Night of the Hunter (KUS - 1955)
- The Wizard of Oz (US - 1939)

2. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think the word "movie" is best. Students B think the word "film" is best. Change partners often.

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Movies / must-sees / top-ten lists / Hollywood / obscure movies / 'ET' / 'Toy Story' / 'Spirited Away' / literature / children's heritage / boys as central characters

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. KIDS' MOVIES: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with kids' movies. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. SCHOOL SUBJECTS: In pairs / groups, rank the following subjects that may be introduced as school subjects for fourteen-year olds. Put the most important subject at the top.

- Movies
- Internet Studies
- Sexual Equality
- Racism Studies
- World Religion
- The History of Art
- Bible / Koran / Torah / etc. Studies
- Basic Cooking
- Personal Finance
- Sexual Health

Change partners and compare your rankings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. A children's Internet site has listed 50 of the best kids' movies. | T / F |
| b. More than 70 film critics helped make the list. | T / F |
| c. All of the movies are Hollywood blockbusters. | T / F |
| d. All of the movies are in English. | T / F |
| e. It is suggested that movies should be a school subject. | T / F |
| f. Movies are a part of children's heritage. | T / F |
| g. There is also a list of movies children shouldn't see. | T / F |
| h. Girls are the central characters in most of the movies. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| a. released | unknown |
| b. critics | background |
| c. wide | promote |
| d. obscure | instead of |
| e. number one | broad |
| f. encourage | top |
| g. treat | published |
| h. heritage | regard |
| i. rather than | main |
| j. central | reviewers |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. a list of | variety |
| b. movie | children should see |
| c. a wide | ten movies were not in English |
| d. an Iranian movie | as a serious school subject |
| e. Five of the top | points |
| f. treat film | 50 movies |
| g. films are a part of | character |
| h. promote the movies that | released in 1987 |
| i. weak | children's heritage |
| j. the central | critics |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

The 50 must-see children's films

BNE: The British Film Institute (BFI) has released a _____ of 50 movies that they say all under-14-year-old children _____ see. More than 70 movie _____ gave their top ten children's movies from _____ the world. The result is a _____ variety of famous Hollywood blockbusters, such as *ET* and *Toy Story*, as well as more _____ movies, like *Where is the Friend's House*, an Iranian movie _____ in 1987. The number _____ film is Hayao Miyazaki's 2001 movie *Spirited Away*. Five of the top ten movies were not in English.

The BFI wants to _____ parents and schools to _____ film as a serious school subject, the same as literature and art. The BFI website _____ the fact that films are a part of children's _____. The top-50 list was _____ to promote the movies that children should see _____ than those they shouldn't see. The website also notes some _____ points of the list. The majority of the films are from English-speaking countries and most of the movies have boys as the central _____.

wide
must
released
critics
list
obscure
one
around

rather
heritage
highlights
character
created
encourage
weak
treat

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'movie'** and **'critic'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "KIDS' MOVIES" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about children's movies.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| • released | • treat |
| • critics | • heritage |
| • world | • promote |
| • obscure | • notes |
| • released | • majority |
| • English | • character |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of must-see movie lists?
- d. Are you surprised five of the top ten are not in English?
- e. Have you seen or would you like to see the four movies mentioned in the first paragraph?
- f. How have kids' movies changed over the years?
- g. Do you prefer Hollywood kids' movies or non-American ones?
- h. Does your country produce wonderful children's movies?
- i. Do you think girls will ever become serious movie heroes?
- j. What was the first movie you saw at the cinema?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What is your favorite kids' movie?
- d. Don't you think children would become fat if they watched 50 movies?
- e. What makes a good children's movie?
- f. Do you think children's movies are getting better?
- g. Do prefer kids' movies that have real people in them rather than computer graphics?
- h. Do you think movies should be studied at school?
- i. Do you think movies are an important part of a child's heritage?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

MOVIE CENSOR: You are a censor for children's movies. In pairs decide on the kinds of scenes (listed below) that are appropriate for 12 – 14-year olds

SCENES	ZERO	ONE OR TWO SHORT SCENES IS OK	EVERY 10 MINUTES IS OK	SAME AS ADULT MOVIES
Kissing				
Blood				
Shooting with guns				
Foul language				
Nudity				
Views of dead bodies				
Sex scenes				
Violence				
Scenes of drug use				
Scenes with homosexuality				
Scenes of bullying				

Change partners and share what you discussed earlier.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

The 50 must-see children's films

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The BFI wants to encourage parents and schools to _____ as a serious school subject, the same as literature and art. The BFI website _____ the fact that films are a part of children's _____. The top-50 list was created to _____ the movies that children should see rather than those they shouldn't see. The website also notes some _____ of the list. The majority of the films are from English-speaking countries and most of the movies have boys as the _____ character.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the British Film Institute and children's movies. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. MY FAVORITE: Make a poster on your favorite children's movie. Provide a summary of the story and highlight what makes it great for kids. Show your poster to your classmates in your next lesson.

4. LETTER: Write a letter to the head of the British Film Institute. Tell him / her what movies you think are missing from the top-50 list. Why you think they should be included? Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. F e. T f. T g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. released	published
b. critics	reviewers
c. wide	broad
d. obscure	unknown
e. number one	top
f. encourage	promote
g. treat	regard
h. heritage	background
i. rather than	instead of
j. central	main

PHRASE MATCH:

a. a list of	50 movies
b. movie	critics
c. a wide	variety
d. an Iranian movie	released in 1987
e. Five of the top	ten movies were not in English
f. treat film	as a serious school subject
g. films are a part of	children's heritage
h. promote the movies that	children should see
i. weak	points
j. the central	character

GAP FILL:

The 50 must-see children's films

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The BFI wants to **encourage** parents and schools to **treat** film as a serious school subject, the same as literature and art. The BFI website **highlights** the fact that films are a part of children's **heritage**. The top-50 list was **created** to promote the movies that children should see **rather** than those they shouldn't see. The website also notes some **weak** points of the list. The majority of the films are from English-speaking countries and most of the movies have boys as the central **character**.